

Mr. Clark, Ms Price, and Students of Walnut Ridge Middle School,

The USS Razorback has started her trip back to the US. Mayor Hays signed the transfer papers to take possession of her on Thursday March 25 with a full military ceremony. The Turkish navy had their Band, Color Guard, Admirals, Captains and other VIPs at the ceremony. Mayor Hays, I and John Adams then went on board her and were towed away from the dock. The wind that day was strong and it wasn't safe to start the tow, so we were pulled back to the dock and proceeded to a reception at the navy base in Gölcük.

The next morning at 9:00 o'clock we started the tow to Tuzla. It is 35 miles from Gölcük to Tuzla and the tow took 16 hours. John Adams and I were onboard the tug during the tow. Mayor Hays joined us about 9:00 that night and finished the tow with us at about 3:00 AM.

The USS Razorback is currently snuggled in a protected harbor in Tuzla. Hull cleaning is underway and should be completed in the next few days.

We were on the USS Razorback on Saturday March 27 with an inspection team. Mayor Hays went in the water with his scuba gear to do an underwater inspection with a team of divers. I did an inspection of the interior and to say she is in really good shape would be an understatement. She is in great shape. She will be in the Tuzla area for about the next 30 days to get the batteries removed and have some other work performed. The plan now is to start the move from Tuzla to the US around May 5, 2004.

Before I left to go to Turkey, North Little Rock staff made a banner to get some pictures for all of you. I had the crew sign it along with some other VIPs and I will get the banner to you in the next couple of weeks. See attached pictures. We will keep you updated as we proceed on.

Thank you for all your support.

Greg Zonner